

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

In the Office Action mailed June 2, 2004: claims 1, 3-6, 28, 30-35, 57 and 59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chen et al.; claims 12 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al.; claims 42, 43, 46, 47, 49, 50 and 56 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shamouilian et al.; and claims 2, 8-11, 29, 37-40, 44, 45, 48 and 52-55 were allowed. Also, in the last sentence in section 8 on page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner expressed that the rejected claims could be amended to define around Chen et al. and Shamouilian et al. by reciting that the through hole extends from an inner surface to an outer surface of the retainer ring.

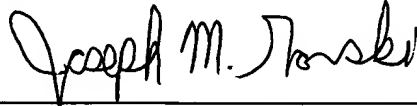
Accordingly, on August 18, 2004, Applicants' undersigned representative spoke with Examiner Rose via telephone to discuss a proposed amendment to each of independent claims 1, 28, 42, 57 and 59 along the lines suggested by the Examiner. Specifically, Applicants' undersigned representative proposed to insert the phrase --from an outer surface to an inner surface of said retainer ring-- after the word "ring" in the final line of each of these claims. Examiner Rose indicated that this amendment should place the application in condition for allowance without the need for filing an RCE.

Accordingly, by the current Amendment claims 1, 28, 42, 57 and 59 have been amended by inserting the phrase --from an outer surface to an inner surface of said retainer ring-- after the word "ring" in the final line of each of these claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance, with the allowed claims being 1-6, 8-12, 28-35, 37-50, 52-57 and 59, and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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